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Zimbabwe | Smallholder Technology  
& Access to Markets Program (STAMP)

## SNAPSHOT

# Paprika Farmer Wins First Prize

**Thanks to good agricultural practices and quality inputs, smallholder paprika farmer takes top prize.**



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Mary Mahufe proudly displays the prizes she won as the top paprika farmer. The wheelbarrow and fertilizer kit will help her farm more efficiently, continually increasing her yield and incomes.

**“I have worked hard and tried to implement everything I learned from USAID-STAMP.”**

Mary Mahufe  
Smallholder paprika farmer

**Telling Our Story**  
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As part of its goal to increase incomes and food security for smallholder farmers, the USAID Smallholder Technology and Access to Markets Program (STAMP) is helping growers diversify into high-value cash crops such as paprika.

Mary Mahufe joined the USAID-STAMP paprika program in 2011. She is one of 1,500 beneficiary farmers receiving training and support from the program in the Mashonaland East province.

The farmers have been contracted by Hyveld, a commercial buyer, and are receiving inputs such as seed and fertilizer. By having access to quality, virus-free seed and a reliable and fair market, the farmers are in a position to earn substantial incomes, moving many of them away from subsistence farming.

USAID-STAMP agronomists also provide technical support, teaching farmers good agricultural practices, such as crop rotation, correct planting density, and integrated pest management, as well as basic business skills such as recordkeeping.

Mahufe took all the trainings to heart, dedicating 0.25 hectares of her land to paprika and allocating another portion to serve as a demonstration plot for the farmers in her producer group.

In late March, Mahufe was chosen to host a field day event, where farmers shared best practices and lessons learned. At the end of the day, prizes were awarded for best crops. USAID-STAMP provided prizes for the top three finishers and the farmers contributed prizes up to 10<sup>th</sup> place. Each farmer contributed \$2 to \$3. Mahufe took first prize in the paprika division, beating 96 other farmers.

The crops were judged by Agritex extension officers based on the following criteria: plant population; pod quantity and quality; absence of diseases; use of mulch and fertilizer; overall crop appearance; and the farmer's use of log books.

As a reward, Mahufe received several prizes that will help her farm more efficiently and effectively, including a wheelbarrow, knapsack, and watering can. She is excited about her win and is looking forward to continued success with her paprika crop.

“I am so elated to be the first place winner in my group,” she said. “I am glad all that work is already beginning to pay off.”

Mahufe expects to harvest at least 400 kilograms of grade A paprika on her small plot, with a sales price of \$1.50 per kilogram, which would earn her \$600, more than double what she earned from maize last year. She also estimates increased maize yields – about 1.4 tons this year. She will keep 500 kilograms for home consumption, 500 kilograms for payment of labor, and the rest to be sold to GMB for additional income.